1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

273 has to take part if he wishes to keep on good terms with the Indians. — »Among the Ashluslay I have taken a hand in several large-scale drinking carousals, and among the Choroti in some smaller ones. It proved an interesting experience, but it required a great deal of fortitude to be able to go through with it. In most villages there is a special [361] place set apart for drinking. There the men begin to foregather about noon, each man bringing his sitting mat and his calabash bowl of a capacity of two to three litres. Huge calabashes of beer are brought by the women. Sometimes the beer is decanted into a large earthenware vessel, out of which it is served. At a festivity where old man Aslù was the host, algaroba beer was handed round to the guests in a genuine European night-chamber, of well-known shape. What lees or dregs there may be in the beer receptacle, the partakers simply fish out with their hands, and then strain between their filthy fingers.

[276]

[574 578]

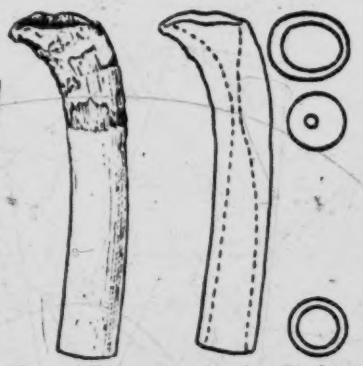

Fig. 153. Tobacco pipe of bamboo. The figure shows the mouthpiece turned downwards. Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 1/6. Riksm. 03. 3. 228.

»A guest, especially if he has the misfortune of being very popular, is very well treated. He is provided with a sitting mat and a calabash holding two or three litres. When he sits down, all wave to him with the flat of the hand, and he must make a similar response. That constitutes the greeting of welcome. After that, it is a matter of drinking, for here the motto is 'no heeltaps', and one must not be uncivil. When one has managed to get a litre down, without throwing it some more the palm-waving is done. The old men sitting next to one, draw their more or less dirty fingers across one's mouth. This is the height of friendliness. If, after all this, one has to run away for a moment, one must by no means forget to wave the hand to one's neighbours and say 'paa', for if not, one is exceedingly unmannerly. The worst of it is that one must come back, and hold out, right through the feast even, whilst one's hosts are drunk and yelling, making speeches, spitting in the festive bowl, and generally feeling themselves good and hearty. Without giving a wipe to the pipe-stem, one has [276] to smoke, turn and turn about, with dirty, slavering, old men.

2: Karsten E-5 (1911-1913)1932 SI7 Mataco SI7
Toba SI12
ChorotiSK6

M
574

remain silent, perhaps muttering some menacing words. This is particularly the way in which the Tobas receive undesired guests. The best thing for a visitor so received is to leave the Indians as soon as possible, since these treacherous and daring savages would not shrink from taking his life.

C
576

When the Choroti guest leaves the house where he has paid a visit he always says: *yápeh*, or: *ayápeh*, »I go», or »I go back (to my own house)», to which the host only answers: *mah*, »go on!», »hurry on!». The Toba guest, on leaving, says *malhék*, or *kiuo* or *málhe'giuo*, (»I go», »I go back to my house»), the host answering with the word *hamóh* (»hurry on!»).

C
439

The *C h o r o t i* barter with those foreign tribes with whom they maintain friendly intercourse, their own most important article of exchange being dried fish. From the Guaraní-speaking Tapiete Indians, and in some cases from the Avas, they receive especially the much appreciated cereal, maize, as well as the red *urucú*-paint, indispensable for painting the face and the body on festival occasions. The *urucú*-shrub, it should be noted, requires a purely tropical climate and does not grow in the Chaco. On the other hand the Choroti barter with the Ashluslay in the south, receiving from them among other things one of their most costly ornaments, a necklace consisting of small buttons cut out from snail's shells and strung closely together. Such a necklace is from three to six yards in length, and is highly valued not only as a pure ornament but also on account of the magical properties ascribed to it. The receiving of these necklaces from the Ashluslay seems to be but a transit-trade, for the latter Indians in their turn buy them from the tribes in the interior of the Chaco, probably from the Lenguas, who according to Mr. Grubb, make such necklaces. Mr. Grubb adds that »these strings of buttons are the money of the people» and that the value of a big necklace is one sheep.[1] As a matter of fact, the Choroti when bartering with the Ashluslay pay one sheep each for these necklaces.

C
[435
436]

Of more interest are the commercial connections which the *T o b a s* have with neighbouring tribes, especially with the Mataco-Noctenes in the west and the Avas in the north. At any rate there is frequent intercourse between the Bolivian Tobas and the Avas living at the Catholic missions Tarairi, Tihüipa, and Machareti. In connection with the visits which these Indians are in the habit of paying to the country of the Tobas, I had an excellent opportunity of studying primitive Indian trade. The

T
648
439

[1]) Grubb, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

2: Karsten E-5 (1911-1913)1932 SI7 Mataco SI7
Toba SI12
Choroti SK6

C 765 forming a falling scale in a minor key, which makes a very peculiar impression. At the time of mourning the women and children commence this wailing at fairly regular intervals and all at once, as if it were agreed upon. To one who lives for some time in a Choroti village it is evident C 765 that wailing forms part of Indian etiquette. Not only must the mourners, when they arrive from another village, which has been abandoned on 576 account of a death, be received by a choir of weeping women and children; any guest who arrives in a village shortly after a death has taken place there is received in the same way. When in March 1912 I visited the Choroti in the interior of their land, where no European had yet penetrated, I noticed with astonishment that on my arrival at a village I was received with loud wailing by the women and children. I soon learnt that a great chief had died some time ago; but the fact that the wailing was renewed to receive me remained unexplained. I was told, however, that this peculiar way of receiving strangers was prescribed by Choroti custom. The most probable explanation seems to me that it is feared lest the spirit of the defunct should revisit his people in a strange disguise, and that the wailing has for its object to propitiate him or to frighten him away. Such ideas prevail among other South American tribes also, both in the Chaco and elsewhere.

M C T 765 302 562 There are certain other customs observed in connection with mourning, but they are as a rule limited to the women. Among all Pilcomayo tribes it is customary that when a man dies, his widow, daughters, and sisters cut their hair short with the sharp teeth of the *palometa* fish and burn it. Ceremonial wailing always attends the cutting of the hair. When I asked the Choroti why a widow cuts and destroys her hair after the death of her husband, I was told that the dead husband, who wants his wife to follow him to the grave, is believed to attack her through T 765 the hair. In order to rid herself of this danger she shaves it off. Exactly the same belief prevails among the Tobas: the dead husband or father will seize his surviving wife or daughter by the hair and cause her to fall ill and die. Among the Tobas a widow cuts her hair twice, first immediately after the husband's death, the second time some months later T [602] when the hair has again grown long. At the same time she repeats the wailing. Similarly the nearest female relatives have to diet, in so far as they are not allowed to eat fish for many months. If they infringe the rules of diet in regard to fish they may sicken and die. After a Toba woman has cut her hair the second time she may again eat fish, her mourning is over and she is allowed to marry again. Even some of the